

1747. Vatican Council (1870), Importance of

SOURCE: Philip Schaff, *The Creeds of Christendom* (New York: Harper, 1919), Vol. 1, p. 146.

The chief importance of the Council of the Vatican lies in its decree on Papal supremacy and Infallibility. It settled the internal dissensions between Ultramontanism and Gallicanism, which struck at the root of the fundamental principle of authority; it destroyed the independence of the Episcopate, and made it a tool of the Primacy; it crushed liberal Catholicism; it completed the system of Papal absolutism; it raised the hitherto disputed opinion of Papal infallibility to the dignity of a binding article of faith, which no Catholic can deny without loss of salvation. The Pope may now say not only, "I am the tradition" (*La tradizione son' io*), but also "I am the Church" (*L'égglise c'est moi*)!

1748. Vatican Council (1870), Lord Acton on

SOURCE: John Emerich Edward Dalberg-Acton, *The History of Freedom and Other Essays* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1909), pp. 493, 494, 531, 532, 545, 546, 549, 550.

[p. 493] The Council of Trent impressed on the Church the stamp of an intolerant age, and perpetuated by its decrees [p. 494] the spirit of an austere immorality. The ideas embodied in the Roman Inquisition became characteristic of a system which obeyed expediency by submitting to indefinite modification, but underwent no change of principle. Three centuries have so changed the world that the maxims with which the Church resisted the Reformation have become her weakness and her reproach, and that which arrested her decline now arrests her progress. To break effectually with that tradition and eradicate its influence, nothing less is required than an authority equal to that by which it was imposed. The Vatican Council was the first sufficient occasion which Catholicism had enjoyed to reform, remodel, and adapt the work of Trent. This idea was present among the motives which caused it to be summoned...

[p. 531] Before the Council had been assembled a fortnight, a store of discontent had accumulated which it would have been easy to avoid. Every act of the Pope, the Bull *Multiplices*, the declaration of censures, the text of the proposed decree, even the announcement that the Council should be dissolved in case of his death, had seemed an injury or an insult to the episcopate. These measures undid the favourable effect of the caution with which the bishops had been received. They did what the dislike of infallibility alone would not have done. They broke the spell of veneration for Pius IX. which fascinated [p. 532] the Catholic Episcopate. The jealousy with which he guarded his prerogative in the appointment of officers, and of the great Commission, the pressure during the elections, the prohibition of national meetings, the refusal to hold the debates in a hall where they could be heard, irritated and alarmed many bishops. They suspected that they had been summoned for the very purpose they had indignantly denied, to make the papacy more absolute by abdicating in favour of the official prelature of Rome. Confidence gave way to a great despondency, and a state of feeling was aroused which prepared the way for actual opposition when the time should come...

[p. 545] When the observations on infallibility which the bishops had sent in to the Commission appeared in print it seemed that the minority had burnt their ships. They affirmed that the dogma would put an end to the conversion of Protestants, that it would drive devout men out of the Church and make Catholicism indefensible in controversy, [p. 546] that it would give governments apparent reason to doubt the fidelity of Catholics, and would give new authority to the theory of persecution and of the deposing power. They testified that it was unknown in many parts of the Church, and was denied by the

Fathers, so that neither perpetuity nor universality could be pleaded in its favour; and they declared it an absurd contradiction, founded on ignoble deceit, and incapable of being made an article of faith by Pope or Council. One bishop protested that he would die rather than proclaim it...

[p. 549] The debate on the several paragraphs lasted till the beginning of July, and the decree passed at length with eighty-eight dissentient votes. It was made known that the infallibility of the Pope would be promulgated in solemn session on the 18th, and that all who were present would be required to sign an act of submission... It was resolved by a small majority that the opposition should renew its negative vote in writing, and should leave Rome in a body before the session. Some of the most conscientious and resolute adversaries of the dogma advised this course. Looking to the immediate future, they were persuaded that an irresistible reaction was at hand, and that the decrees of the Vatican Council would fade away and be dissolved by a power mightier than the Episcopate and a process less perilous than schism. Their disbelief in the validity of its work was so profound that they were convinced that it would perish without violence, and they resolved to spare the Pope and themselves the indignity [p. 550] of a rupture. Their last manifesto, *La dernière Heure*, is an appeal for patience, an exhortation to rely on the guiding, healing hand of God. They deemed that they had assigned the course which was to save the Church, by teaching the Catholics to reject a Council which was neither legitimate in constitution, free in action, nor unanimous in doctrine, but to observe moderation in contesting an authority over which great catastrophes impend.

1749. Vatican Council (1870), Submission of Dissenting Bishops Explained

SOURCE: Philip Schaff, *The Creeds of Christendom* (New York: Harper, 1919), Vol. 1, p. 162.

The following considerations sufficiently explain the fact of submission.

1. Many of the dissenting Bishops were professedly anti-Infallibilists, not from principle, but only from subordinate considerations of expediency, because they apprehended that the definition would provoke the hostility of secular governments, and inflict great injury on Catholic interests, especially in Protestant countries. Events have since proved that their apprehension was well founded.
2. All Roman bishops are under an oath of allegiance to the Pope, which binds them "to preserve, defend, *increase*, and *advance* the rights, honors, privileges, and authority of the holy Roman Church, of our lord the Pope, and his successors."
3. The minority Bishops defended Episcopal infallibility against Papal infallibility. They claimed for themselves what they denied to the Pope. Admitting the infallibility of an oecumenical Council, and forfeiting by their voluntary absence on the day of voting the right of their protest, they must either on their own theory accept the decision of the Council, or give up their theory, cease to be Roman Catholics, and run the risk of a new schism.

At the same time this submission is an instructive lesson of the fearful spiritual despotism of the Papacy, which overrules the stubborn facts of history and the sacred claims of individual conscience. For the facts so clearly and forcibly brought out before and during the Council by such men as Kenrick, Hefele, Rauscher, Maret, Schwarzenberg, and Dupanloup, have not changed, and can never be undone. On the one hand we find the results of a life-long, conscientious, and thorough study of the most learned divines of the Roman Church, on the other ignorance, prejudice, perversion, and

defiance of Scripture and tradition; on the one hand we have history shaping theology, on the other theology ignoring or changing history; on the one hand the just exercise of reason, on the other blind submission, which destroys reason and conscience.

1750. Vicarius Filii Dei, Catholic Discussions of

SOURCE: Answers to readers' questions in *Our Sunday Visitor*. Volumes and pages as indicated. [FRS Nos. 16–18.]

a. Number of the Beast

3 (Nov. 15, 1914), 3

Is it true that the words of the Apocalypse in the 13th chapter, 18th verse refer to the Pope?

The words referred to are these: “*Here is wisdom. He that hath understanding, let him count the number of the beast. For it is the number of a man; and the number of him is six hundred sixty-six.*” The title of the Pope of Rome is *Vicarius Filii Dei*. This is inscribed on his mitre; and if you take the letters of his title which represent Latin numerals (printed large) and add them together they come to 666:

qc	x825	qc	x1050	qc	x1275	qc	x1500	qc	x1725	qc	x1950	
qc	x2175	qc	x2400	qc	x2750	qc	x2975	qc	x3200	qc	x3425	
qc	x3650	qc	x3875	qc	x4100	qc	x4325					
V I C a r I V s f I L I I D e I												
qc	x825	qc	x1050	qc	x1275	qc	x1500	qc	x1725	qc	x1950	
qc	x2175	qc	x2400	qc	x2750	qc	x2975	qc	x3200	qc	x3425	
qc	x3650	qc	x3875	qc	x4100	qc	x4325					
5	1	100		1	5		1	50	1	1	500	1

Add these together and the result will be 666.

This “argument” was submitted to Rev. Ernest R. Hull, and answered in the following manner: “Almost every eminent man in Christendom, who has enjoyed the privilege of possessing enemies, has had his name turned and twisted till they could get the number 666 out of it. In past history there have been numberless beasts or Anti-Christ, all of whose names counted up to 666. I fancy that *my own name*, especially in Latin form, might give the number of the beast:

qc	x825	qc	x1050	qc	x1275	qc	x1500	qc	x1725	qc	x1950		
qc	x2175	qc	x2400	qc	x2750	qc	x2975	qc	x3200	qc	x3425		
qc	x3650	qc	x3875	qc	x4100	qc	x4325						
e r n e s t V s r e g I n a L D V s h													
V L L													
qc	x825	qc	x1050	qc	x1275	qc	x1500	qc	x1725	qc	x1950		
qc	x2175	qc	x2400	qc	x2750	qc	x2975	qc	x3200	qc	x3425		
qc	x3650	qc	x3875	qc	x4100	qc	x4325						
		5			1		50	500	5		5	50	50

—666*Quod erat demonstrandum*, namely, that Rev. Ernest R. Hull is Anti-christ, or the Beast of the Apocalypse!”

Perhaps a little ingenuity with *your* name will show that you are the beast of the Apocalypse too.

b. Inscription of Pope's Miter

4 (April 18, 1915), 3

What are the letters supposed to be in the Pope's crown, and what do they signify, if anything?

The letters inscribed in the Pope's mitre are these: *Vicarius Filii Dei*, which is the Latin for Vicar of the Son of God. Catholics hold that the Church which is a visible society must have a visible head. Christ, before His ascension into heaven, appointed St. Peter to act as His representative. Upon the death of Peter the man who succeeded to the office of Peter as Bishop of Rome, was recognized as the head of the Church. Hence to the Bishop of Rome, as head of the Church, was given the title "Vicar of Christ."

Enemies of the papacy denounce this title as a malicious assumption. But the Bible informs us that Christ did not only give His Church authority to teach, but also to rule. Laying claim to the authority to rule in Christ's spiritual kingdom, in Christ's stead, is not a whit more malicious than laying claim to the authority to teach in Christ's name. And this every Christian minister does.

c. Pope's Tiara Not Inscribed
30 (Aug. 3, 1941), 7

A pamphlet has come to me entitled "The Mark of the Beast." It identifies the Pope with this "mark" referred to in Revelations XIII, 17, 18.

It is too bad that the Seventh Day Adventists, who are so sensitive of criticism themselves, should circulate a pamphlet so antagonistic to the Catholic Church.

The question you ask has been answered many times, although not in recent years, in this paper. If we have recourse to the best Biblical scholars or exegetes, we find them applying the text from Revelations to Nero, the arch-persecutor of Christianity in the first century. To give color to their accusation enemies of the Church publicize something that is not at all true, namely that the Pope's tiara is inscribed with the words "VICARIUS FILII DEI", and that if letters in that title were translated into Roman numerals, the sum would equal 666.

As a matter of fact the tiara of the Pope bears no inscription whatsoever.

Sometime ago a clergyman by the name of Reginald Ernest Hull gave a Latin ending to his two Christian names and then figured out what the sum total would be if he translated the letters into Roman numerals, and 666 eventuated. Your own name might spell that number.

Here is the manner in which it was done: Reginal[d]us Ernestus Hull: From his first name four numerals were drawn I L D V; from his second name only the letter V was extracted; from his surname the three Roman numerals, namely V L L.

Now the Roman numeral "D" stands for 500; the L stands for fifty and since there are three "L's" they would effect 150; the three "U's", which are identified with a "V" would mean 15 more, and the letter "I" would signify one—the total 666.

The first thirty Popes lived in the golden age of Christianity and twenty-nine of them died martyrs for Christ. Imagine any one of them being designated the "beast" of the Apocalypse. Among the 262 Popes who ruled over the Catholic Church from the time of Christ, all but four or five, even according to the unwilling admission of unfriendly historians, were among the holiest men of their times. The few unworthy ones, who were placed on the throne of Peter reached that position through the intrigue of civil rulers. Only five Popes have ruled over the Church during the greater part of the last century and every person, unless he be absolutely uninformed or ignorant, would rate them among the

saintliest people. We say “unless the person were uninformed or ignorant,” designedly, because the lives of these Popes have been written by Protestants as well as Catholics.

It is very strange that people can regard themselves as religious and still engaged in an apostolate of vituperation and slander.

[EDITORS’ NOTE: These three extracts are confusing. In the first it is not clear whether the reference to *Vicarius Filii Dei* as inscribed on the pope’s miter is the writer’s statement, or merely a part of the “argument” in which it occurs, and which may or may not be the opinion of the writer. In the second the writer does say, without qualification, that the miter bears these words, but he does not give the source of his information. The third, some years later, denies that there is any inscription on the pope’s tiara, a headdress differing from the miter. Is this meant as a refutation of the second answer, or does it merely ignore the question of the miter? Or was the inscription formerly used and later abandoned? There is no proof of its use at the present time.]

1751. Vicarius Filii Dei—Peter Called “Vicar of the Son of God” in Forged Donation of Constantine

SOURCE: Donation of Constantine, quoted in Christopher B. Coleman, *The Treatise of Lorenzo Valla on the Donation of Constantine*, pp. 12, 13. Copyright 1922 by Yale University Press, New Haven, Conn. Used by permission. [FRS No. 14.]

[p. 12] Sicut B. Petrus in terris vicarius Filii Dei esse videtur constitutus, ita et Pontifices, qui ipsius principis apostolorum gerunt vices, principatus potestatem amplius quam terrena imperialis nostrae serenitatis mansuetudo habere videtur, consessam a nobis nostroque imperio obtineant...

[p. 13] As the Blessed Peter is seen to have been constituted vicar of the Son of God on the earth, so the Pontiffs who are the representatives of that same chief of the apostles, should obtain from us and our empire the power of a supremacy greater than the clemency of our earthly imperial serenity is seen to have conceded to it.

1752. Virgin Birth, Koran on

SOURCE: Koran, Sūra xix. 19–21, preceded by Comment 139 (on Sura xix. 16–40), in *The Holy Qur’an*, trans. by Abdullah Yusuf Ali (New York: Hafner, 1946), Vol. 2, pp. 770–772. Copyright 1946 by Khalil Al-Rawaf. Used by permission of the director of the Islamic Center, Washington, D.C.

[p. 770] C[omment] 139 [on Sūra xix. 16–40]

Next comes the story of Jesus and his mother

Mary. She gave birth, as a virgin, to Jesus,

But her people slandered and abused her

As a disgrace to her lineage. Her son

Did defend her and was kind to her. He

Was a servant of God, a true Prophet,

Blessed in the gifts of Prayer and Charity,

But no more than a man: to call him

The son of God is to derogate from God’s

Majesty, for God is High above all

His Creatures, the Judge of the Last Day.

[p. 771] 19. He said: “Nay, I am only

a messenger from thy Lord,

(To announce) to thee

The gift of a holy son.”

20. She said: “How shall I

Have a son, Have seeing that

No man has touched me,
And I am not unchaste?"

21. He said: "So (it will be):
Thy Lord saith, 'That is
Easy for Me: and (We
Wish) to appoint him
As a Sign unto men
And a Mercy from Us':

[p. 772] It is a matter
(So) decreed."

[EDITORS' NOTE: Commentary is not any part of the Koran; it represents simply the view of the author of the comment.]

1753. Virgin Earth-goddess, Queen of Heaven

SOURCE: Stephen H. Langdon, *Semitic [Mythology]* (Vol. 5 of *The Mythology of All Races*. Boston: Archaeological Institute of America, 1931), pp. 108, 109. Copyright 1931 by Marshall Jones Company, Inc. Used by permission of The Macmillan Co., New York.

[p. 108] In religion and mythology, of even greater importance than these three heads of the trinity, Anu, Enlil, and Enki, is the Sumerian Mother-goddess, whose character was so manifold that she became many distinct goddesses... The great and ubiquitous cult of the virgin Earth-goddess in Canaan, Phoenicia, and Syria seems to have been entirely borrowed from Babylonia. As already suggested, the primitive name of this Sumerian goddess seems to have been Ninanna, Innini, "Queen of Heaven." ... [p. 109] Three main types of the Earth-goddess, together with their minor manifestations, are clearly recognizable, Innini, the Semitic Ishtar, Mah, "the mighty goddess," Accadian Bêlit-ilî, "Queen of the gods," and the underworld goddess Ereshkigal.

1754. Virgin Mother-goddesses—The Virgin Goddess Innini as the "Weeping Mother"

SOURCE: Stephen Herbert Langdon, "Babylonian and Assyrian Religion," *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 1961 ed., Vol. 2, p. 858. Copyright 1960 by Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc., Chicago. Used by permission.

Innini, the virgin heaven goddess, is only a specialized aspect of the earth mother... To understand the deeper aspects of this religion a complete study of the character of the mother goddess under her various titles is necessary. She consistently represents divine mercy and compassion as opposed to the severe and wrathful characters of the male deities. When men sin the gods punish with terrible vengeance, but the mother goddess ever intercedes for them. The religious scenes on seals in all periods represent her standing in prayer beside humans, and interceding with a god on their behalf. To the very end of Babylonian religion, Nintud, Aruru, Innini, Ishtar may be correctly described as the *mater dolorosa*, the "Weeping Mother."

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¹Neufeld, D. F., & Neuffer, J. (1962). *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Student's Source Book*. Commentary Reference Series. Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association.